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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2011

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ARIZONA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – James C. Russell, 53, of Phoenix, Arizona, pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers, to federal drug charges. From in or about 2006 until May 19, 2010, Russell admitted to conspiring with known individuals to distribute 1000 kilograms or more of marijuana. The defendant further admitted to recruiting drivers for a drug trafficking organization based in Arizona and Mexico, to transport marijuana to various locations including Zanesville, Ohio. It was part of the conspiracy that the marijuana would be delivered by the drivers to individuals in Ohio for further distribution to other areas including Huntington, West Virginia. Russell also admitted that he was provided cash payments and marijuana in exchange for recruiting drivers for the drug trafficking organization.

Russell faces a minimum mandatory of 10 years in prison and a \$4 million fine when he is sentenced on August 8, 2011.

This case was investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Putnam County Sheriff's Department. Assistant United States Attorney Monica Dillon is in charge of the prosecution.

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WAYNE COUNTY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL FIREARMS POSSESSION CHARGE

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Michael Anthony Clark, 50, of East Lynn, Wayne County, West Virginia, pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers, to possessing firearms after having been convicted of felony offenses. On October 19, 2010, Clark admitted to traveling with an associate to the Smokin' Aces storefront which was located in Huntington in order to sell firearms. The defendant admitted to being in possession of seven firearms, including a loaded Accu-Tek, 9-millimeter pistol on his person. The firearms, excluding the Accu-Tek, 9-millimeter pistol, were sold to an undercover agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) inside the storefront in exchange for \$1,000. Clark admitted to providing the Accu-Tek, 9-millimeter pistol to agents as collateral on a proposed future transaction.

Clark was prohibited from possessing a firearm based on prior felony convictions in West Virginia and Georgia. The defendant admitted to possessing a total of 19 firearms, some of which were reported stolen at the time he possessed them. Clark will be sentenced on August 1, 2011.

This case is being prosecuted as part of a yearlong undercover operation that targeted illegal drugs and firearms crimes in the Huntington area. The operation was led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and assisted by the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Huntington Police Department, and various other law

enforcement agencies. It was announced to the public in March after a grand jury returned indictments against 55 defendants.

Special Assistant United States Attorney Joseph Adams is in charge of the prosecution.

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HUNTINGTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Clark Brandon Brown, 30, of Huntington, West Virginia pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers to distribution of a quantity of cocaine base, also known as “crack.” The defendant admitted that on June 24, 2010, he and an associate arrived at the Smokin’ Aces store which was located in Huntington, to complete a drug transaction. The transaction had been previously arranged by Brown’s associate. Brown admitted to giving the crack cocaine to the associate, who then handed it to a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agent in exchange for \$700. The crack cocaine was subsequently tested and weighed at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Mid-Atlantic Laboratory. The substance tested positive for crack cocaine weighing 10.8 grams.

Also, on January 28, 2011, a confidential source working for the River Cities Gun and Drug Task Force arranged to purchase a quantity of crack cocaine from the defendant. Brown admitted to meeting the confidential informant at a Mexican restaurant parking lot in Huntington, where he sold the informant a quantity of crack cocaine in exchange for \$600. On March 3, 2011, Special Agents with the ATF, along with an officer with the Huntington Police Department arrested Brown on a warrant issued as a result of the indictment in this case. At the time of the arrest, Brown was driving a 2006 Jeep model Sport Utility Vehicle, where he admitted to having approximately two pounds of marijuana inside of the vehicle.

Brown faces up to 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine when he is sentenced on August 1, 2011.

The investigation was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Assistant United States Attorney Greg McVey is in charge of the prosecution.

This case is being prosecuted as part of a yearlong undercover operation that targeted illegal drugs and firearms crimes in the Huntington area. The operation was led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and assisted by the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Huntington Police Department, and various other law enforcement agencies. It was announced to the public in March after a grand jury returned indictments against 55 defendants.

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